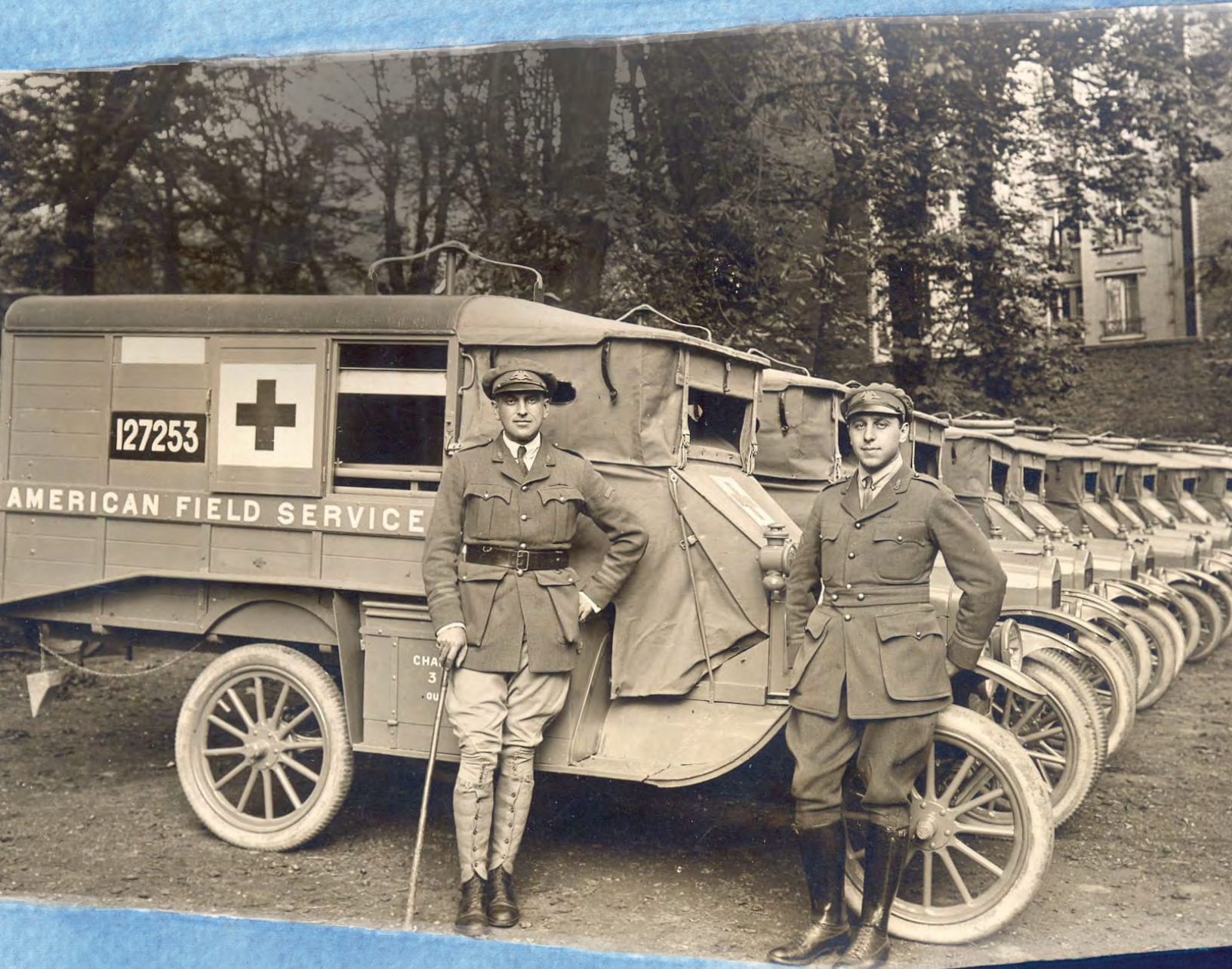




THE Volunteers

Americans Join World War I, 1914-1919

CURRICULUM





Connecting lives. Sharing cultures.

Dear Educator,

Welcome to ***The Volunteers: Americans Join World War I, 1914-1919 Curriculum!***

Please join us in celebrating the release of this unique and relevant curriculum about U.S. American volunteers in World War I and how volunteerism is a key component of global competence and active citizenship education today. These free, Common Core and UNESCO Global Learning-aligned secondary school lesson plans explore the motivations behind why people volunteer. They also examine characteristics of humanitarian organizations, and encourage young people to consider volunteering today.

AFS Intercultural Programs created this curriculum in part to commemorate the 100 year history of AFS, founded in 1915 as a volunteer U.S. American ambulance corps serving alongside the French military during the period of U.S. neutrality. Today, AFS Intercultural Programs is a non-profit, intercultural learning and student exchange organization dedicated to creating active global citizens in today's world.

The curriculum was created by AFS Intercultural Programs, together with a distinguished Curriculum Development Committee of historians, educators, and archivists. The lesson plans were developed in partnership with the National World War I Museum and Memorial and the curriculum specialists at Primary Source, a non-profit resource center dedicated to advancing global education. We are honored to have received endorsement for the project from the United States World War I Centennial Commission.

We would like to thank the AFS volunteers, staff, educators, and many others who have supported the development of this curriculum and whose daily work advances the AFS mission. We encourage secondary school teachers around the world to adapt these lesson plans to fit their classroom needs- lessons can be applied in many different national contexts. The curriculum is meant to help students learn more about the volunteer efforts of young people during World War I, and inspire them to become active global citizens today.

Warm regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Vincenzo Morlini'.

Vincenzo Morlini
President and CEO



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Melissa Liles'.

Melissa Liles
Chief Education Officer



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**PRIMARY
SOURCE**

Global learning matters.

Cover Photograph

AFS Founder and Inspector General A. Piatt Andrew and Assistant Inspector General Stephen Galatti at the AFS headquarters in Paris, France in 1917.
Photograph by H.C. Ellis. Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs.

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AFS INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS



AFS Intercultural Programs began as the American Ambulance Field Service (later known as the American Field Service or AFS), a voluntary ambulance and *camion* (truck) organization which emerged soon after the outbreak of World War I under the leadership of A. Piatt Andrew, a former director of the U.S. Mint. In April 1915 Andrew negotiated an agreement with the French military to have units of American ambulance drivers serve closer to the front lines of battle. The 2,500 AFS volunteers participated in every major French battle, carrying supplies and more than 500,000 casualties.

After the war ended, the AFS volunteers established an AFS Association to coordinate reunions and to administer the AFS Fellowships for French Universities program. The AFS Fellowships program ultimately funded 222 students to travel to and from France for advanced graduate study by the time it was discontinued in 1952.

AFS was reactivated at the start of World War II by Stephen Galatti, who had been an AFS ambulance driver and Assistant Inspector General during World War I. By the end of the war, 2,196 volunteers served in France, North Africa, the Middle East, Italy, Germany, India, and Burma, carrying more than 700,000 casualties.

In 1946 AFS volunteers from both World Wars assembled in New York City to discuss the future of the organization. Under the leadership of Galatti, they launched a secondary school student exchange program that they hoped would maintain and strengthen the international friendships they fostered during their wartime humanitarian work. The first AFS secondary school students arrived in the U.S. in 1947 on a scholarship program. In 1950 the Americans Abroad (AA) Summer Program was initiated, allowing U.S. American high school students to go abroad through AFS, and by 1957 AA students



had the option to spend several months abroad during the fall and attend foreign schools. In 1971, the AFS Multinational Program began, allowing students to travel to and from countries other than the United States. The AFS Programs continued to diversify over the years by adding community service projects and teacher exchange programs, and the number of participating countries rose steadily.

In February 1984 the Workshop on Intercultural Learning Content and Quality Standards affirmed AFS's commitment to intercultural learning and formally defined its Educational Goals. These 16 Educational Goals continue to define the educational approach, guide ongoing practices, and set AFS apart as a unique educational program.

Research efforts focusing on achieving a deeper understanding of the impact of exchange programs continued in the 21st century, from the cutting-edge Assessment of the Impact of the AFS Study Abroad

Experience study in 2005, to the AFS Long Term Impact Study in 2006. Building on these research results, the AFS Intercultural Link Learning Program launched in 2011. The purpose of this multi-step training and assessment program is to enable volunteers and staff worldwide to better support AFS students, families, and schools in the learning process.

Today, AFS is a global community of more than 50 partner organizations that support intercultural learning and promote active global citizenship education, primarily through exchange programs. AFS is dedicated to building an inclusive community of global citizens determined to build bridges among cultures as it moves into its second century.

Visit www.afs.org to learn more!

Photographs
(page 2) AFS ambulance drivers in Paris, France in 1917. *Photograph by O. King.*
(page 3) Participants of the 100 Years Young! AFS Youth Workshop & Symposium held in Paris, France in 2014. *Photograph by Incorp Agency/Guillaume Deperrois.*
Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs.

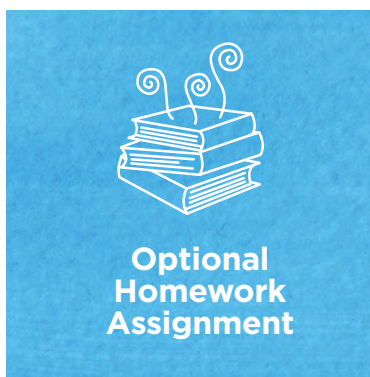
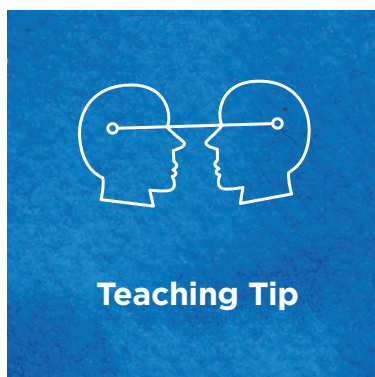
ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

Twenty-two lesson plans are made available through the following six topics:

- 1| U.S. American Volunteers in World War I, 1914-1917
- 2| U.S. American Women's Volunteerism and Suffrage in World War I
- 3| Diversity and Debate on the U.S. Home Front During the "European War"
- 4| Lost Generation Artists and Writers as World War I Volunteers
- 5| Humanitarian International Relief: A Legacy of Great War Volunteerism
- 6| Young People, Volunteerism, and Global Citizenship: From World War I to the Present

Within each topic you will encounter and work with the following components:

- An [Overview](#) containing [Essential Questions](#) that frame the issues behind the topic; [Objectives](#) for student learning; [United States](#) and [International Curriculum Standards](#) for measuring [Assessment](#); and estimated [Time](#) and necessary [Materials](#) needed to complete the lesson plans in each topic.
- A [Background Essay](#) written by a specialist and providing insight and context for the lesson plans. The essay can be read by both students and educators.
- [Instructions](#) for each lesson plan, including an [Activator](#) that elicits students' prior knowledge and serves to engage students in an underlying theme or question, helping to bridge between past and present and demonstrating the global learning implications of the historical material at hand; the [Lesson](#) or [Lessons](#), which include handouts, questions for reflection and discussion, and tasks for students to complete using a wide array of unique primary sources; and an [Extension Activity](#) that engages students in global citizenship education, and complements, deepens, or extends learning of the historical topic, including through immersion in research tasks or presentations that can be adapted to the needs of your class or those of individual students.
- [Attachments](#) which can be used as lesson plan handouts. Additionally, each topic directs you to a curated collection of maps, articles, websites, books, and videos to support and enrich your teaching, found in the Resources section of the [Teacher Toolkit](#) at thevolunteers.afs.org/resources.
- Color-coded [Tips](#), which will help to enhance your teaching experience, adapt activities to the global classroom, and provide optional, related homework assignments for students:



TOPIC 4

LOST GENERATION ARTISTS AND WRITERS AS WORLD WAR I VOLUNTEERS



How did the unprecedented death and destruction of World War I affect artists and writers? Specifically, how did volunteer service in the First World War shape the lives and perspectives of some American writers and artists, members of the “Lost Generation”? The lesson plans in this topic invite secondary school learners to explore how the volunteer service of some of the most famous U.S. American writers and artists—Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, E. E. Cummings, and Henry O. Tanner—was reflected through the aesthetics and themes of their work. It also invites students to interpret the poetry, prose, and artwork of these individuals and to infer what they intended to convey about war itself.

This topic is divided into three interrelated lesson plans that could be taught independently or as a whole, depending upon grade level, instructional objectives, and time:

1. Activator, *In Flanders Fields: One Writer’s Response to War*
2. Lesson, *Lost Generation Artists and Writers: Volunteer Experience and Artistic Expression*
3. Extension Activity, *Researching the Literature of War*

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Photograph

Artist and American Field Service ambulance driver Waldo Peirce sketching on the side of his ambulance during World War I. Courtesy of the Archives of the American Field Service and AFS Intercultural Programs.

OVERVIEW

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How does the life experience of a writer or artist, particularly the experience as a volunteer in World War I, shape that individual and his or her subsequent work?
2. What can we, as readers, learn about World War I and war in general from reading the work of authors who have lived these experiences?
3. How do the artistic choices of the Lost Generation differ from those of other artists and writers of the World War I era?
4. How might experiencing war's chaos first-hand lead some individuals to embrace rebellion and non-conformity?
5. How do participants in a group like the Lost Generation influence one another while still maintaining distinctly differing styles?

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to discuss some of the ways that war experience shapes artistic expression, with World War I writers and artists as an example.
2. Students will be able to define the term “Lost Generation” and characterize the overall outlook of some of its writers and artists.
3. In regard to the Lost Generation writers and artists who served as volunteers, students will be able to explain how each individual's volunteer experience in World War I influenced the works that students examine in the lesson.
4. Students will be able to articulate why an author makes particular choices with regard to punctuation, grammar, line breaks, purposeful ambiguity, and other literary features in order to develop the meaning of a text.
5. Students will be able to articulate the similarities between authors of the “Lost Generation” and trace how one author's work may have influenced another's work.

STANDARDS: UNITED STATES

National Center for History in the Schools, National History Standards

U.S. Era 7 - The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)

- Standard 2C: The student understands the impact at home and abroad of the United States involvement in World War I.
- Standard 3C: The student is able to explain the growth of distinctively American art and literature from the social realists to the “Lost Generation.”

World Era 8 - Half Century of Crisis & Achievement (1900-1945)

- Standard 2B & 4B: The student understands the global scope, outcome, and human costs of WWI & WWII.

Historical Thinking Standards

- Standard 4: The student obtains historical data from a variety of sources.

Common Core Standards: Literacy in History/Social Science, Science, and Technical Subjects, Grades 6–12

- R1: The student reads closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cites specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- R6: The student assesses how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- R7: The student integrates and evaluates content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

STANDARDS: INTERNATIONAL

Educators outside the United States should consult their own national standards for comparable content and skills.

UNESCO Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Objectives

Topic: Actions that can be taken individually and collectively

Learning objective: Students examine how individuals and groups have taken action on issues of local, national, and global importance and get engaged in responses to local, national, and global issues.


- Anticipating and analyzing the consequences of actions
- Identifying benefits, opportunities, and impact of civic engagement

Learning objective: Students demonstrate appreciation and respect for difference and diversity, cultivate empathy and solidarity towards other individuals and social groups.

- Personal and shared values, how these may differ and what shapes them
- Importance of common values (respect, tolerance and understanding, solidarity, empathy, caring, equality, inclusion, human dignity) in learning to co-exist peacefully
- Complex and diverse perspectives and notions of civic identities and membership on global issues or events or through cultural, economic, and political examples (ethnic or religious minorities, refugees, historical legacies of slavery, migration)

ASSESSMENT

Components for assessment include full-class discussions, a graphic organizer, and a culminating writing assignment.




Optional Homework Assignment
The [Background Essay](#) can be assigned as reading homework for students.

TIME

Two to three 50-minute class periods.

MATERIALS

- Computer and projector, computer lab, or laptops for the Lesson
- Attachments for the Activator and Lesson



Teaching Tip
Visit the [Teacher Toolkit](#) for more information and resources for teaching this topic.

BACKGROUND ESSAY

Lost Generation Artists and Writers as World War I Volunteers

By: Dr. Alan Price

“You are a lost generation,” writer Gertrude Stein told Ernest Hemingway; and he used the description in one of his most famous books, *The Sun Also Rises*. The name “Lost Generation,” first published by Hemingway, has come to stand for a group of disillusioned American writers and artists who went to Europe during the First World War. The war they participated in was a destructive one—the glory of the cavalry charge became the clanking of the tank; the honor of hand-to-hand combat turned into impersonal aerial bombardments, exemplified by the lobbing of shells into Paris streets from a position forty miles away. It was hard to uphold the noble traditions of war when poison gas covered some of the trenches, which stretched from the English Channel to Switzerland. At the end of the First World War, nine million men were dead: the number of deaths for civilians was even larger.

Many, like Hemingway, were still in their teens when they became involved in World War I. While many members of the Lost Generation were unpaid volunteers with a humanitarian aid organization or ambulance corps, others also served as paid soldiers in the military. They went abroad for often contradictory reasons: they were bored at home, they wanted to help France and England, they wanted to serve. Basically, they wanted to do something.

What they found was a terrible war, and their service as ambulance drivers, stretcher-bearers, soldiers, and humanitarian aid workers put them right in the middle of it. They had wanted mobility, the chance to drive, the opportunity to move freely through Europe. What they frequently found was that they were grounded, immobilized given the circumstances of trench war-

fare. Hemingway was injured after being struck by a mortar shell during his volunteer service with the Red Cross in Italy, and spent six months in the hospital. The experimental poet E. E. Cummings wrote anti-patriotic letters home during his time as a volunteer ambulance driver in France, and wound up in a French jail for four months.

They were young, but they were also artists—tellers of stories and creators of pictures. They had to do something with their experiences, and their experiences told them that the old way of blindly following orders and doing one’s duty no longer made sense. The old rules would almost certainly get you killed.

The reactions of young Americans to the war were mixed. Some who went to war were mysterious about their experience, like F. Scott Fitzgerald’s character in *The Great Gatsby*. Others tried to be lighthearted, like the character in Cole Porter’s song “When I Had a Uniform on” who concludes, “Gee, I wish I could start another war.” Others came home to commemorate their service through organizations like the American Legion.

The ones we remember today as the Lost Generation are those who were disillusioned by their wartime experience. If they were lucky, they survived their war experiences. But the world did not. It was one world in 1914 when the war began, but it was something completely different in 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles was signed. The old markers and direction signs were gone—obliterated at places like Verdun, Ypres, and the Somme. And here was a young generation of Americans who had come to Europe. And they were without the traditions of the past to guide them: they were lost.

INSTRUCTIONS

Activator

“In Flanders Fields”: One Writer’s Response to War

#.5.7

1. Give each student a copy of the poem “In Flanders Fields” by John McCrae. (See lesson attachment: **In Flanders Fields**.) Ask for a volunteer to read the poem out loud. Provide no context or background for this initial reading.

Lead a class discussion of the poem, using some of these questions for guidance:

- What do you notice about the style and tone of the poem?
- What feelings does the poem convey to you?
- What is the poet’s attitude toward the war in which he participated? What lines or word choices give that impression?

Teachers’ Note: Students will likely note that the poem has a conventional meter and rhyme scheme. They may notice that the speaking voice is that of the collective group of dead soldiers and that the poem creates a melancholy, mournful feeling in the reader. They may comment that the poem ends with a call to arms, for the living to carry on the fight against “the foe.”

2. After the initial discussion, share some background information about the poet John McCrae (1872–1918)

and general facts about World War I. See McCrae’s biographical sketch at the Poetry Foundation [here](#).

Follow up with these questions:

- How do you think McCrae’s war experience shaped his artistic outlook?
- How does his biography shed light on his most famous poem, “In Flanders Field”?
- What is the range of possible responses that war can elicit from an artist or writer?
- If you were going to write a poem about a war or violent conflict familiar to you, what tone or style would you use? What messages would you wish to convey?



Global Classroom Tip

Have students read World War I poems in multiple styles and from multiple countries. The Poetry Foundation prepared a digital collection of English-language works to commemorate the centennial, “The Poetry of World War I” [here](#). For other international anthologies, see the [Teacher Toolkit](#).

Photograph

No Mans Land, Flanders Field.

Panoramic Photographs Collection. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Lesson

Lost Generation Artists and Writers: Volunteer Experience and Artistic Expression

In this lesson, students will analyze the work of four artist/writers of the Lost Generation: Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, E. E. Cummings, and Henry O. Tanner. The phrase “Lost Generation” was made popular by Ernest Hemingway in the epigraph of *The Sun Also Rises*. Hemingway credited the phrase to Gertrude Stein; she used it to reference the expatriate writers and artists that she gathered at her home in Paris and mentored, describing their feelings of loss and despair and their rejection of current values after World War I.

Interestingly, many of the preeminent writers and artists of this group served as volunteers during the war. This included Gertrude Stein, a driver for the American Fund for French Wounded, and Ernest Hemingway, an ambulance driver for the American Red Cross in Italy. The poet E. E. Cummings volunteered with the American Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps, an outfit associated with the British Red Cross; he was imprisoned by the French in Normandy for several months after expressing some anti-war views. At the same time, Henry O. Tanner, an African American artist most famous for his painting *The Banjo Lesson* among oth-

ers, put aside painting during the war and undertook volunteer service with the American Red Cross. There he was allowed to complete sketches from the front lines depicting the life of the soldiers and, in particular, the experiences of African American troops.

How did volunteer experiences influence the outlook of Cummings, Tanner, Hemingway, and Stein on life, war, and art? In the following lesson, students analyze



Teaching Tip

The four individual lesson parts can be taught separately or all together. Complete at least two parts if you would like to do the culminating activity with your students.

Photograph

American Red Cross (ARC) volunteer Ernest Hemingway recuperates from his wounds at the ARC Hospital in Milan, Italy, September 1918. *Ernest Hemingway Collection*. Courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston.

short samples or excerpts from their early postwar work to explore these themes and address the essential questions for this topic. Be sure to provide students with background information about World War I and its destruction as context before beginning the lesson.

Part A: Ernest Hemingway and his short story “Soldier’s Home”

1. Share with students some background information on Ernest Hemingway related to his World War I experiences. See this biographical essay available through the [United States National Archives](#), reading only the introduction and section titled “Hemingway and World War I.”

Points to highlight:

- He had originally wanted to join the army but poor vision kept him from enlisting and so he quickly turned to becoming a volunteer ambulance driver in May of 1918.
- In July of the same year he was wounded by a mortar shell and had over 200 shrapnel fragments in his leg. This injury had a serious effect on not only his physical well-being but his emotional well-being and outlook.
- When he returned home to the U.S. in 1919, he was only 19 years old and felt misunderstood by his family and friends who couldn’t relate to his experiences in the war.

2. Ask students to read the short story **“Soldier’s Home” by Ernest Hemingway**. Consult your school librarian or complete a search online to find the complete short story.

As they are reading they can respond to text-dependent questions (See lesson attachment: “Soldier’s Home” by Ernest Hemingway.) to guide their understanding. The following notes will help you guide student answers to the “Soldier’s Home” questions:

- **Question D:** Students might say, for example, that Krebs lies because he feels he was lied to about the war by his government, his family, etc. They might also note that his lies reveal his need to keep the truth about war secret or private and the fact that he feels compelled to romanticize war to keep others happy. Additionally, they may note that Krebs

had to lie about loving his own mother and that the war had taken away his ability to connect with his family and others.

- **Question E:** Students might note that while the pressure for soldiers to conform once they return to society was strong, Krebs found it impossible to simply slip back into society because the war had changed him so drastically. He did not feel he could simply get a job and get married like other soldiers did after returning home. The war had left him closed off and he could not simply pick up life where he left off because too much had changed for him.

- **Question G:** Students might note the feelings that Krebs is experiencing that are not directly stated, like his depression and his disengagement with his old life. They might also infer some of the possible lies that Krebs told, whether it was glorifying the war and his actions or hiding some terrible things he may have done.

- **Question H:** Answers for surface traits or qualities could include: quiet, shy, withdrawn, dutiful brother and son. Answers for hidden traits or qualities could include: depressed, disillusioned, disengaged, angry, unable to feel love or human connections.

3. Once students have completed the story and accompanying questions, ask the class to think about why Ernest Hemingway wrote “Soldier’s Home.”

- What was he trying to convey about soldiers’ experiences returning home?
- How might his own life experiences volunteering in the war have shaped his views of war and its effects?

Part B: E. E. Cummings and his poems “my sweet old etcetera” and “next to of course god america i”

1. Share with students some background information on E. E. Cummings related to his World War I experiences. See the biographical essay found on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s Department of English’s website [here](#).

Points to highlight:

- Cummings volunteered with the American Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps in France in 1917.

- He and a friend were falsely imprisoned in France under suspicion of espionage because he expressed some pacifist views in his letters. He spent four months in a prison camp which inspired his first autobiographical work *The Enormous Room*.
- He returned to the U.S. and was drafted into the army where he served at Camp Devens in Massachusetts.

2. Ask students to read two poems by E. E. Cummings, “my sweet old etcetera” and “next to of course god america i.” Consult your school librarian or complete a search online to find the complete poems.

As they are reading they can respond to text-dependent questions (See lesson attachments: **“my sweet old etcetera” by E. E. Cummings** and **“next to of course god america i” by E. E. Cummings**.) to guide their understanding. The following notes will help you guide student answers to the “my sweet old etcetera” questions:

- **Question C:** Students may note that the phrase “etcetera” could represent how the speaker felt his family droned on with no real knowledge of war. They might also note that the phrase could emphasize the inevitability or repetition of war and how society keeps repeating the same patterns with regard to war.
- **Question D:** Students may note that the dramatic line break after “die etcetera” shocks the reader because it characterizes the mother as if she wishes her son would die. Then, it goes on to say she wishes he would die “bravely” but the idea that the mother seems heartless and so caught up in public perception over her son’s life it already planted in the readers’ minds.

The following note will help you guide student answers to the “next to of course god america i” questions:

- **Question A:** Students may pose that the patriotic rhetoric and the fact that he then drank a glass of water would suggest that the speaker of the quotation is a politician or someone else giving a public speech. The fact that he drank it rapidly may convey that he was nervous or uncomfortable with his speech in some way.

3. Divide the students into pairs or groups of three and ask each group to choose one word or phrase from either poem that they believe captures Cummings’s view on war. Then, compile all of these words or phrases on the board or projector. You might find useful an educational technology tool such as [Padlet](#) that allows students to post their work on a group “wall” that everyone in the group can view at once. As a class, ask students to defend and debate their choices. Work as a class to determine one central phrase or word that might capture Cummings’s view.

Part C: Gertrude Stein and excerpts from The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas and her play Accents in Alsace: A Reasonable Tragedy

1. Share with students some background information on Gertrude Stein’s life in the war years. See the biographical entry available through the Jewish Women’s Archive website [here](#).

Points to emphasize:

- She was living in Paris at the start of World War I and in 1916, she and her lifelong companion and partner Alice Toklas volunteered for the American Fund for the French Wounded delivering hospital supplies, in a car that Stein purchased and learned to drive.
- Stein was already immersed in a circle of experimental European writers and artists before the war began (including the painter Picasso) and had begun her own experimentations with writing form and content.
- After the war, she served as a mentor to many young writers, later famous, such as Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. She dubbed them the “lost generation” of writers because of their disillusionment and rebellion after the war. She would host many of these young artists and writers in her home and support and critique their work.
- She wrote *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* as if it were the first-person voice of Toklas, her lifelong partner, but the work is a merged memoir expressing the life experiences and thoughts of both women, particularly Stein. In it there are many passages that tell the story of the volunteer service the women did together during World War I, and after, their

relief work in the Alsace region and elsewhere.

2. Ask students to read excerpts from *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* and answer the text-dependent questions as they read. (See lesson attachment: **The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas by Gertrude Stein.**)

The following note will help you guide student answers to *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* questions:

- **Question C:** Students may pose that the innocence of the soldiers she met juxtaposed against the atrocities of war and some of the injuries she could have seen might have stimulated her to write about the injustices of war. Students may pose any number of topics that she could have chosen to write about and should just support their predictions with relevant evidence.

3. Ask students to read and listen to a short excerpt from Gertrude Stein's 1919 play *Accents in Alsace: A Reasonable Tragedy* while you read it out loud. (See lesson attachment: **Accents in Alsace: A Reasonable Tragedy by Gertrude Stein.**) Explain that the play has no identifiable characters, speakers, or stage directions.

As a class, discuss these questions:

- What do you think this section of the play is about? How could the words of this section relate to the section title, "Watch on the Rhine"? What is the significance of the overall title of the play? How could this section relate to the play's title, *Accents in Alsace*?
- Stein liked to challenge conventions of form, punctuation, and meaning. How might this excerpt and its performance have challenged typical conventions of post-World War I life? How might her experience in the war have helped deepen her desire to be a literary or social non-conformist?
- Stein was a mentor to Ernest Hemingway and he spent a great deal of time visiting her house and sharing his work with her during and after the war. What similarities and differences do you see between their work and how might Stein have influenced Hemingway?

Teachers' Note: This question only applies if your class completed Part A of the Lesson. You may want to remind students of the character of Krebs

and his resistance to conforming to society's expectations of him once he returned from war. While Stein refused to conform to written conventions, Hemingway embodied that same ideal in his characters' actions.

- E. E. Cummings says that Gertrude Stein's work was a big influence on his work. What parallels do you see between this play and his poems? How might both writers have been influenced by their volunteer experiences in the war?

Teachers' Note: This question only applies if your class completed Part B of the Lesson. Students may note that both writers may have been disillusioned by what they saw and experienced in the war and expressed that in their unwillingness to conform to society's conventions of what typical writing or English grammar rules should look like.

Part D: Henry O. Tanner and A.R.C. Canteen, World War I, 1918, one of his charcoal drawings of African American soldiers

1. Share with students some background information on Henry O. Tanner related to his experiences in the war. See this biographical entry available through the [American National Biography Online](#).

Points to highlight:

- Tanner was an African American painter born in the U.S. who spent much of his life in Paris. Although he is most famous for his religious paintings and his work depicting African American life, his charcoal drawing *A.R.C. Canteen, World War I, 1918* is a compelling picture of the life of soldiers, specifically the integration of African American and white soldiers.
- At the start of World War I, he was so deeply frustrated by the conflict that he stopped producing art and began volunteering for the American Red Cross in France where he worked with recovering soldiers.
- He was one of only a few artists authorized to create sketches from the war front and he began making art again on Armistice Day in 1918.

2. [Here](#) is a link to Tanner's charcoal drawing, courtesy of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The drawing is done from the perspective of a server in the

canteen and he is looking out at a racially integrated line of soldiers. Project it for the class to see or ask students to access it on individual devices.

3. Ask students to complete the OPTIC graphic organizer as they examine the artwork in detail. (See lesson attachment: **OPTIC for Henry O. Tanner’s Charcoal Drawing, A.R.C. Canteen, World War I, 1918.**)

4. Finally, discuss the follow-up questions as a class:

- Why do you think Tanner felt compelled to produce drawings that portrayed soldiers and the volunteer work in which he was participating?
- Knowing what you do about Tanner’s volunteer work, why do you think he chose this unusual perspective for the drawing from behind the server’s back? How do you think the drawing would have been different if he chose to draw it from the soldier’s perspective?

Teachers’ Note: Students may note that the volunteer’s perspective allowed the viewer to see the soldiers’ faces and that this vantage point clearly highlights the racial integration of this line of men, which was in direct opposition to racial segregation back in the U.S. at the same time.

- As a viewer, does this picture give you more or different insight into WWI than the written works did? Why or why not?
- What do you notice about race relations during WWI according to this drawing? How would this have differed from race relations at home in the U.S. in 1918? How do you think the experience of an African American soldier returning home to the U.S. might be the same or different from the main white character in Hemingway’s story “Soldier’s Home”?

Teachers’ Note: This question only applies if your class completed Part A of the Lesson.

Culminating Activities for the Lesson: Here are creative writing prompts that can serve as culminating

activities if students have completed two or more of the lesson parts above.

Remind students that they have examined works by selected artists and writers identified with the Lost Generation, considering some of the unique ways that these individuals wove their wartime volunteer experience into their artistic expression. (They should reorganize that these were not the only artists and writers to comment on the war, nor were they the only artists and writers who served as wartime volunteers.)

1. Choose one of the authors above (Ernest Hemingway, E. E. Cummings, or Gertrude Stein) and write an original creative piece emulating his or her style. Think of the topics that your chosen writer preferred to write about and think about the use of conventions (or lack thereof) that your chosen writer used.
2. Letter writing was a common practice in this time period. Choose two of the authors or artists from above and write a letter from one to the other. Have your “character” talk about his or her experiences in the war and how they might have felt about those experiences. Also, have your “character” refer to one of his or her works and talk about how the war inspired him or her to create it and how the war impacted the work itself.
3. Gertrude Stein often entertained famous writers and painters in her home for evening discussions on politics, society, and one another’s works. Hemingway spent time in her home, as did F. Scott Fitzgerald, Pablo Picasso, and others. Although we do not have evidence that she ever entertained E. E. Cummings or Henry O. Tanner, write a short creative fictional play pretending that these four people were all in Stein’s living room at the same time. Have each writer or artist speak to one another and address or comment on one another’s works and their efforts and experiences in the war.



Extension Activity

Researching the Literature of War

Below are some research-based activities that you might use with students to extend their understanding.

1. After students have read and viewed the work of four Lost Generation writers and artists, ask them to think about what influences are specific to this time and place of World War I and Europe and what influences are “universal” as a response to war front experience?

Ask students how war experience has factored into the writing of authors in other conflicts and cultures. Assign students different wars to research and ask them to find major writers who were influenced by their experiences in those wars.

2. Ask students to choose one of the four “Lost Generation” artists and writers featured in the lesson and invite them to find one to two other works that can demonstrate the influence of their experiences in World War I on his or her style.

3. Ask students to research another writer of the Lost Generation such as F. Scott Fitzgerald or Ezra Pound who was not directly involved in volunteer efforts in World War I. Ask them to compare and contrast their work with those of the writers directly involved in the war effort. Are there similarities or differences? Did direct war experience produce a greater impact on the themes and style of war-volunteer writers than those writers who merely lived during the war?



Global Classroom Tip

You can direct students to the work of artists or writers from your nation or region and consider the impact of the war on their subject matter and style.

Photograph

Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein (behind the wheel of the ambulance.)
Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

ATTACHMENTS

The following pages contain printable attachments meant for classroom distribution. In some cases, multiple copies should be printed. Pages should be printed single-sided. Please consult the directions provided under the Activator and Lesson for more information.

In Flanders Fields

BY JOHN MCCRAE

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

“Soldier’s Home”

BY ERNEST HEMINGWAY

A. The second paragraph of the story reads, “There is a picture which shows him on the Rhine with two German girls and another corporal. Krebs and the corporal look too big for their uniforms. The German girls are not beautiful. The Rhine does not show in the picture.” What negative details does Hemingway point out about the picture? What might the author be trying to suggest about the difference between people’s expectations of the war and the realities of the war?

B. Hemingway writes, “His town had heard too many atrocity stories to be thrilled by actualities. Krebs found that to be listened to at all he had to lie ...” Why does he have to lie? What are the people back home expecting to hear from him? Read on and predict what some of the lies are that Hemingway had to tell.

C. When Hemingway refers to Krebs not wanting to put in the effort to date or to talk to girls, he writes, “He did not want any consequences. He did not want any consequences ever again. He wanted to live along without consequences.” What does this reveal about the main character’s feelings, and possibly about Hemingway’s feelings, about how war can affect a soldier?

D. Hemingway writes a lot about the lies that Krebs has to tell. As you read, make note of the different lies that Krebs tells his mother and other people he encounters. Why would Hemingway put so much emphasis on the act of lying? What does each lie reveal about the effects of war on soldiers?

E. Hemingway was a non-conformist in many ways, especially after his experiences in the war. Make note of the ways in which his main character, Krebs, refuses to or can't conform to what society expects him to do after the war. What do you think Hemingway was trying to convey about the pressures to conform to society's expectations?

F. At the end of the story, Krebs plans to move away from his family to Kansas City and to take a job. Why do you think he wants to leave? Predict whether you think he will leave and what his life will be like. Use evidence from the story to support your predictions.

G. Hemingway once said about writing, "If a writer of prose knows enough of what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water." What are some of the unwritten details that Hemingway is trying to convey about how soldiers feel when they return from war?

H. If you can imagine a person as an iceberg, we only see a small part of any person or their surface characteristics just like we only see a small portion of any iceberg above the water. Then, there is a lot to every person that is hidden under the surface as well. Create a visual representation of Krebs as an iceberg. Label the traits or qualities that the people in his town see on the surface above the water line. Label the hidden traits or qualities that we, as a reader, can see from his thoughts.

“my sweet old etcetera”

BY E. E. CUMMINGS

A. What is each family member in the speaker’s family doing in connection with the war?

	What is he or she doing in connection with the war?	How would you characterize this person?
Aunt Lucy		
Isabel (His Sister)		
Mother		
Father		
Speaker		

B. How do the speaker’s views or feelings about the war differ from everyone else’s in his family? (Note that he is the one person who can actually participate as a soldier.)

C. Why do you think Cummings keeps inserting the phrase “etcetera”? What could this represent?

D. Why might Cummings put the line breaks in the specific places he does in the following lines? What dramatic effect does it make?

E. Clearly, E. E. Cummings refused to conform to the conventions of grammar and punctuation. Why might he have chosen to disregard the typical rules of writing? What does this say about his views on life? How might Cummings’s experiences in the war have helped shape him into a non-conformist?

“next to of course god america i”

BY E. E. CUMMINGS

A. Every line of the poem except the last is one large quotation. Who do you think the speaker is? What does his drinking “rapidly a glass of water” convey about his feelings as he is speaking?

B. The speaker includes phrases from the national anthem and other patriotic songs. However, he juxtaposes these with unusual phrasing and nonsense words. What do you think Cummings was trying to convey with this juxtaposition? What is he trying to convey about patriotism?

C. Cummings includes the lines, “these heroic happy dead/who rushed like lions to the roaring slaughter/they did not stop to think they died instead.” What is he saying about the soldiers who fought in the war? What does this reveal about his feelings about war in general?

The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas

(EXCERPTS)

BY GERTRUDE STEIN

EXCERPT #1

We came back to an entirely different Paris. It was no longer gloomy. It was no longer empty. This time we did not settle down, we decided to get into the war. One day we were walking down the rue des Pyramides and there was a ford car being backed up the street by an american girl and on the car it said, American Fund for French Wounded. There, said I, that is what we are going to do. At least, said I to Gertrude Stein, you will drive the car and I will do the rest. We went over and talked to the american girl and then interviewed Mrs. Lathrop, the head of the organisation. She was enthusiastic, she was always enthusiastic and she said, get a car. But where, we asked. From America, she said. But how, we said. Ask somebody, she said, and Gertrude Stein did, she asked her cousin and in a few months the ford car came. In the meanwhile Cook had taught her to drive his taxi (228-229).

The little ford car was ready. Gertrude Stein had learned to drive a french car and they all said it was the same. I have never driven any car, but it would appear that it is not the same. We went outside of Paris to get it when it was ready and Gertrude Stein drove it in. Of course the first thing she did was to stop dead on the track between two street cars. Everybody got out and pushed us off the track. The next day when we started off to see what would happen we managed to get as far as the Champs Elysees and once more stopped dead. A crowd shoves us to the side walk and then tried to find out what was the matter. Gertrude Stein cranked, the whole crowd cranked, nothing happened. Finally an old chauffeur said, no gasoline. We said proudly, oh yes at least a gallon, but he insisted on looking and of course there was none. Then the crowd stopped a whole procession of military trucks that were going up the Champs Elysees. They all stopped and a couple of them brought over an immense tank of gasoline and tried to pour it into the little ford. Naturally, the process was not successful. Finally getting into a taxi I went to a store in our quarter where they sold brooms and gasoline and where they knew me and I came back with a tin of gasoline and we finally arrived at the Alcazar d'Ete, the then headquarters of the American Fund for French Wounded. ...

We had a consultation with Mrs. Lathrop and she sent us off to Perpignan, a region with a many good hospitals that no american organisation had ever visited. We started. We had never been further from Paris than Fontainebleau in the car and it was terribly exciting (234-235).

We did finally arrive at Perpignan and began visiting hospitals and giving away our stores and sending word to headquarters if we thought they needed more than we had. At first it was a little difficult but soon we were doing all we were to do very well. We were also given quantities of comfort-bags and distributing these was a perpetual delight, it was like a continuous Christmas. We always had permission from the head of the hospital to distribute these to the soldiers themselves which was in itself a great pleasure but also it enabled us to get the soldiers to immediately write postal cards of thanks and these we used to send off in batches to Mrs. Lathrop who sent them to America to the people who had sent the comfort-bags. And so everybody was pleased (240).

The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas

(EXCERPTS)

BY GERTRUDE STEIN

EXCERPT #2

I often wonder, I have often wondered if any of all these doughboys who knew Gertrude Stein so well in those days ever connected her with the Gertrude Stein of the newspapers.

We led a very busy life. There were all the americans, there were a great many in the small hospitals round about as well as in the regiment in Nimes and we had to find them all and be good to them, then there were all the french in the hospitals, we had them to visit as this was really our business, and then later came the spanish gripe and Gertrude Stein and one of the military doctors from Nimes use to go to all the villages miles around to bring into Nimes the sick soldiers and officers who had fallen ill in their homes while on leave.

It was during these long trips that she began writing a great deal again. The landscape, the strange life stimulated her (251).

EXCERPT #3

Soon we came to the battle-fields and the lines of trenches of both sides. To any one who did not see it as it was then it is impossible to imagine it. It was not terrifying it was strange. We were used to ruined houses and even ruined towns but this was different. It was a landscape. And it belonged to no country.

I remember hearing a french nurse once say and the only thing she did say of the front was, c'est un paysage passionant, an absorbing landscape. And that was what it was as we saw it. It was strange. Camouflage, huts, everything was there. It was wet and dark and there were a few people, one did not know whether they were chinamen or europeans. Our fanbelt had stopped working. A staff car stopped and fixed it with a hairpin, we still wore hairpins.

Another thing that interested us enormously was how different the camouflage of the french looked from the camouflage of the germans, and then once we came across some very very neat camouflage and it was american. The idea was the same but as after all it was different nationalities who did it the difference was the inevitable. The colour schemes were different, the designs were different, the way of placing them was different, it made plain the whole theory of art and its inevitability.

Finally we came to Strasbourg and then went on to Mulhouse. Here we stayed until well into May.

Our business in Alsace was not hospitals but refugees. The inhabitants were returning to their ruined homes from all over the devastated country and it was the aim of the A.F.F.W. to give a pair of blankets, underclothing and children's and babies' woollen stockings and babies' booties to every family. There was a legend that the quantity of babies' booties sent to use came from the gifts sent to Mrs. Wilson who was supposed at that time to be about to produce a little Wilson. There were a great many babies' booties but not too many for Alsace (254-255).

The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas

(EXCERPTS)

BY GERTRUDE STEIN

Questions for Discussion:

A. Many of the tasks that Gertrude Stein and her partner Alice B. Toklas carried out in their volunteer service were meant to increase the morale of the soldiers or the citizens. Make note of the different tasks they completed as you read. Why was keeping up morale important during the war?

B. In excerpt one, how would you describe the language and tone that Stein establishes in her writing? (Students may offer light, humorous, satiric, story-telling, circus-like atmosphere, etc.) Why might Stein have chosen this tone for her subject matter?

C. In excerpt two, Stein writes about herself, "It was during these trips that she began writing a great deal again. The landscape, the strange life stimulated her." Why might this life have stimulated her to write? Predict what types of topics and ideas their war experience might have stimulated Stein to write about.

D. In your own words, how does Stein describe the battlefields and the trenches in excerpt three?

E. When the French families returned to their ruined houses (excerpt three), what were the objects that Stein and Toklas were giving them on behalf of the American Fund for the French Wounded? Why do you think Stein included that detail? How would you feel if these were the only belongings you had as these French families did?

Source
A Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933).

Accents in Alsace: A Reasonable Tragedy

(EXCERPT)

BY GERTRUDE STEIN

The Watch on the Rhine

Sweeter than water or cream or ice.
Sweeter than bells of roses. Sweeter than
winter or summer or spring. Sweeter than
pretty posies. Sweeter than anything is my
queen and loving is her nature.

Loving and good and delighted and best
is her little King and Sire whose devotion is
entire who has but one desire to express
the love which is hers to inspire.

In the photograph the Rhine hardly
showed.

In what way do chimes remind you of
singing. In what way do birds sing. In what
way are forests black or white.

We saw them blue.

With for get me nots.

In the midst of our happiness we were
very pleased.

published in 1919

Note: "Watch on the Rhine" is the name of a
patriotic German war song

Source
Agnes Cardinal, Elaine Turner, and Claire M. Tylee, eds., *War Plays by Women: An International Anthology* (e-book), 45.
(<https://books.google.com/books?id=gRZUAQAQBAJ&dq=Gertrude+Stein+accents+in+alsace>)

OPTIC for Henry O. Tanner's Charcoal Drawing,

A.R.C. CANTEEN, WORLD WAR I, 1918

<h1>O</h1>	<p>O is for Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see happening in this charcoal drawing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the people depicted and what do you notice about them? 	
<h1>P</h1>	<p>P is for Parts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some small details you see that stand out as you look more closely? • What is the man with his back to us doing? 	
<h1>T</h1>	<p>T is for Title</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The title for this piece is A.R.C. Canteen, World War I. (A.R.C. = American Red Cross). What is a canteen and why might Tanner have chosen this setting for his drawing? 	
<h1>I</h1>	<p>I is for Interrelationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the relationship between the white and African American soldiers in this drawing? • What is the connection between the server and the soldiers? 	
<h1>C</h1>	<p>C is for Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think Tanner was trying to show viewers about the war and particularly about the experience of the African American soldiers in the war? 	